

FREE SOCIETY

ENTERED AT SAN FRANCISCO POSTOFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism: Holding that Equality of Opportunity alone Constitutes Liberty; that in the Absence of Monopoly Price and Competition Cannot Exist, and that Communism is an Inevitable Consequence.

VOL. VI. NO. 9.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 1900.

WHOLE NO. 249.

WHERE WILL IT END?

The world is in the mire
Of discontent,
For paltry hire
The best of life is spent.
Where will it end?
The vaunting rich reach out
For more and more,
Nor heed the rout
Of the despairing poor.
Where will it end?
In charity's sweet name
They offer gifts
And make one shame
The deeper by their shifts.
Where will it end?
Justice at greater cost
Waits to be bought,
For law hath lost
The sense of moral "ought."
Where will it end?
The press doth but uphold
The passing hour,
And we are told
Of those in place and power.
Where will it end?
The Church is far too fine
For poor men's clothes,
And preachers whine
More of our "sins" than woes.
Where will it end?
We have small chance to heaven
The way to go.
In vain we turn
To those who claim to know.
Where will it end?
Their theories obscure
We pay to hear
Who only lure
Us on from fear to fear.
Where will it end?
But whether short or long
Life hastens by,
And none can wrong
Us of the right to die.
There it will end.

Alcott, Colo.

VICTOR E. SOUTHWORTH.

MASTER AND SERVANT.

No man should be the servant of another, no man should labor for another man for pay. Whoever sells his labor sells himself, and he is no more his own master. He is a slave, at least so long as his engagement lasts. Every able-bodied man should help himself, wait upon himself, provide for himself, and the same remark would apply to any able-bodied woman, or to a child that has passed the age of feebleness and immaturity. If a person should be helped at all, it is because of his disability, and not because of his rank or position, nor on account of the class or clan to which he may happen to belong. Those who labor in a subordinate place, should labor with others, rather than for others. Their place and position should be like that of the child in a family, or that of the apprentice in the old time guilds; or like the individual in a village or country town, where there are no ranks and where all stand upon the same platform. There should be no aristocracy anywhere. We have classes and castes only when the hearts of men are perverted and when they become selfish, arrogant and tyrannical.

A servant, we all know, was a slave (servus). There were originally no other servants than slaves. Servants after a time take the place of slaves; that is one of the stages in the transition. But there should be no sale of labor today. All men should be equally free. Men might aid others as a kindness or favor, but NEVER FOR PAY. All men should earn their own living, do their work and BE THEIR OWN SERVANTS AND THEIR OWN MASTERS.

It is known that service is only a form or modification of slavery. In feudal times there was no

paid service. It should be remembered that all slaves are mere things. No laws are made for their benefit or for their protection. They have absolutely no rights. They are merged and lost in the owner—and so it is to a considerable extent with the servant. Slaves have no soul and there is no heaven for them. All the thoughts and conceptions connected with slavery arise from the mere accident of a man's being found in the power of another and left dependent upon his will. The misfortune in his case was that he happened to be the weaker one and so was subdued and brought under the yoke. Had he had more strength, more cunning or more skill, perhaps the case would have been entirely different. Then he might have been the master, perhaps, and the other fellow the slave. A man has just as much right to hold another man in bondage as he has to hold him to service. A servant is in our power, either from want or from some other cause, and if it were not for this fact, he certainly would not be our servant. That we pay a servant something for his services, and do not pay the slave, makes no difference in the real nature of the case. We have to support our slaves and we leave the servants to support themselves—there is the only difference. What we pay our servants is merely what supports them, and they often get a poorer living than they would if they were slaves. Even the horse that labors for us we are obliged to feed. We pay the servant merely because we would rather do that than furnish him the house, food and clothes that he would need, and in that way we have far less cause for concern than if he were our slave. If our servant were our slave, we would have to furnish medical services and all such things. Now we PAY the servant, and there our obligation ends. It is but a little matter to us if the servant dies, for probably we know where we can get another servant for the same or even less money. It is about the same as if we lose an ox or a horse. It is no wonder at all that slavery has been abolished! IT DID NOT PAY, or at least it was not so cheap and so convenient as our present system of hired labor. When we tire of a servant, we can change him; but in the case of the slave the change is not so easily made. The slave is property, the servant is not.

If we did not have hired service, if we did not appropriate the avails of the labor of others, we should never become rich. Without slavery in some form, no people could accumulate riches. It would be only a few thousand dollars that any man of himself could earn and save even in a life time. Yes, he might get rich by conquest, but the principle is the same. WE GET OUR WEALTH ALWAYS BY TAKING WHAT OTHER PEOPLE HAVE EARNED AND SAVED. What difference does it make whether we appropriate a man's labor or his property? His property is identified with his labor. It has long been known that NO MAN gets rich by HIS OWN exertions, or HIS OWN LABOR. A man might avail himself of the aid of all the powers of nature, the winds, the waves, the earth, and even then his labors would never make him really rich, not even if he lived to be a hundred years old. ALL PROFITS COME FROM THE LABORS OF OTHER PEOPLE, AND SO ALL PER CENTS. These, it is well known, are the main sources of wealth. I know very well that a man might manufacture an article, but he could never get rich in that way. The only way that men get rich by manufacture is by selling their wares for more than they are worth, or more than they cost. MEN GET RICH FROM PROFITS AND THE PROFITS ALWAYS COME FROM OTHER MEN.

How far should we ask or demand help from others? Shall others do our work for us, while we remain idle and receive the benefits of their labors? Perhaps we may with propriety assist the feeble, the unfortunate and the helpless by doing work that properly does not belong to us to do, but about our obligation in that direction, there is room for much question. However, whatever we do in this way should be done because we will, not because we ought or must. There is no reasonable basis for any such obligation as that. It is a law of nature, that those who cannot help themselves must be left to fall by the way.* To a great extent that is the rule that prevails in savage as well as in civilized life. It is evident enough that in modern life we do altogether too much to foster indolence and impotence, by the assistance that we are accustomed to render to those who appear to be needy. There is no possible question that the number of our paupers is greatly increased by our misguided charity in feeding them, instead of enabling them to feed themselves.

Again, I ask, on what ground can I justly avail myself of profits that come from what another man earns, either in whole or in part? Evidently there can be no foundation for any such claim. I have no more right to another man's labor than I have to have to his person or his property. There is no relation, no actual connection of any kind, between any two independent beings. So, how could there be ties or obligations between them?

It is clear that I can only insist upon a man's working for me, on the condition that he is my slave or vassal. But can a man make a binding contract to labor for me—to sell himself to me and be my slave, even for a time? I apprehend not. It does not accord with our usual way of viewing things. There can be nothing valid or binding in a contract that involves the slavery of a human being. It is against the most vital interests of society.

The conclusion to the whole matter would seem to be this: Every man should do his own work, and never receive any recompense except the legitimate product of his own labor. Of course under such a condition of affairs, such a thing as riches or wealth as we have now would be impossible.

One remark more—people who are compelled to employ help in any way must be content to remain dependent, they must, practically, be slaves to their own slaves. No man can be called independent who is not able to provide for himself and do his own work. Dependence upon servants or slaves is just as bad as any other kind of dependence.—From "Life Without a Master," by J. Wilson, Ph. D., Newark, N. Y.

* I have failed to find this "law of nature" exhibited among men. On the contrary, we find even among the animals mutual sympathy and an endeavor to aid the helpless. Even the author himself violates this law when he writes books in order to awaken the manhood and spirit of independence of the downtrodden toilers. Is it not sympathy that prompts him to take up the battle for the slaves against the tyrants? The fact is that without the sentiment of solidarity and sympathy society would perish.

A. I.

For Philadelphia.

Russian Evening Party, with the co-operation of Mr. M. E. Medvedeff as chief soloist, will be given for the benefit of Free Society on Friday, Jan. 26, 1900, at 8 p. m., at Pennsylvania Hall, 8th & Christian Sts. Dancing until 3 a. m. Tickets 25 cents. All friends of Free Society are cordially invited.

FREE SOCIETY.

FORMERLY "THE FIREBRAND."

Published Weekly by Free Society Publishing Ass'n.

50 CENTS A YEAR.

Address all Communications and make all Money Orders payable to FREE SOCIETY, 236 Clinton Park, San Francisco, Calif. For visitors off Market St. Castro car.

Anarchy.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal; absolute individual liberty.—Century Dictionary.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

Investigators of the new fad of Theosophy will be amply repaid by procuring a copy of *The Cosmopolitan* for December. It contains an article entitled: "M'dam Blavatsky: High Priestess of Isis," by H. Ridgely Grans, which exposes that unscrupulous adventuress and is an eye-opener to the easy going public that is only too prone to listen to and accept as genuine all such mysterious humbugs and impostors.

"Religious marriage is a failure," said a prominent Spiritualist in a recent lecture. "We need neither gods nor priests in marriage, but we must have a certificate to show that the woman is my wife in case anybody should come and claim her." Think of it, ye that believe in the sacredness of marriage: we do not require a certificate when we buy a piece of furniture, a horse or a cow, but we must have it black on white from an official that the woman is *our property*. She has no voice, no choice in the matter, according to the gentlemen who with great zeal advocates the "sublime philosophy of Spiritualism." When will women rise and throw off the yoke of slavery imposed upon them by their husbands? Take your freedom, and you will be your own masters.

"It is a sad phenomenon," says an exchange, "that there are yet plenty of young and vigorous men who will sacrifice their health and life for the benefit of cowardly tyrants, and robbers in high places, but have not the courage even to risk their positions for the sake of freedom. Thousands of these 'heroes' often submit to be butchered in a single day, while in the service of selfish tyrants, without even attempting to evade the danger. Nothing worse could happen to them in a battle against their oppressors. Where there should be courage and noble enthusiasm there is cowardice and indolence, but for a military command they courageously face death even for a contemptible cause. It is beyond comprehension."

Thousands of poor souls have been killed on the altar of capitalism during the past year in order to enrich a few; many have been shot down and imprisoned because they dared to attempt to improve their condition; 5340 persons committed suicide because they were robbed of the necessities of life or their individuality cramped by a perverted morality; and yet there are fools and knaves who tell us that the social question can be solved peaceably and without bloodshed.

A Kentuckian woman is frightened by the many outrages committed upon women in the South and suggests emasculation, since "burning, hanging, cutting up while alive, and every hellish torture that men can conceive, has been tried by mob law to abate this terrible mania, and failed to intimidate." Poor deluded woman! If "burning and cutting up while alive" did not "intimidate" it is evident that emasculation will also fail to remedy the evil which is caused by puritanism, perverted morality, restrictions and Christian stupidity. The South is a good example of the fact that where punishment is the severest there are the most criminals.

I cannot agree with Comrade Holmes when he favors "Anarchist judges, justices of the peace, and lawyers." To be logical we then must come to the conclusion of the State Socialist and "capture the government" in order to establish Anarchy. But what of the axiom that a man endowed with power will abuse it? Robespierre, who once "was a young advocate of promise; and gave up the Arras of judgeship rather than sentence one man to die," did not hesitate to have those opposed to him "put out of the way" when his power increased. A judge or justice of the peace must strictly comply with the law, i. e., prosecute and condemn people for deeds we do not consider criminal. I think

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a man who refuses to serve a jury does more for freedom than one who takes part in judging others. A. I.

THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The sympathies of the average American seem to be decidedly with the Boers in the horrible war now being waged in South Africa. How cynical, how blunderingly stupid, and how absolutely criminal the conduct of the English government has been seems however not to be appreciated in its entirety. I have not seen a single reference made,—in this country,—to the worst feature in the case. The facts are given, with just criticism as to their bearing, by Auberon Herbert, in the November number of *The Free Life*. Every one will remember that at the last stage of the quarrel, prior to the beginning of war, the Transvaal government at last made a revised offer of the concessions it was willing to make,—concessions so large that there was very little left to argue about; after a little more haggling, and more concession, the English government sent in its fatal reply. Every one has taken this reply to have been a refusal to entertain the Boer proposals; the Boers understood it so, and the English government allowed time to go without explaining that there was any misunderstanding whatever as to what the message meant. The Transvaal took it "with deepest regret," as a refusal of their offer, adding pathetically "that they never could have anticipated that the answer to their offer would be unfavorable." The Boers, seeing the evident intention of England was to force on a war, withdrew the concessions and the war began. Now comes the extraordinary and immorally criminal part of the whole business. As Auberon Herbert states: "Mr. Chamberlain has since made the extraordinary declaration in the House of Commons that the government meant to accept the Transvaal offer," explaining that it was a "qualified acceptance." This acceptance was transmitted to the Transvaal in such a form of words that the Boers read it as a refusal! "The government having meant to accept the offer are quite satisfied to have their meaning misinterpreted!" Events were allowed to develop into war, in absolute silence on the part of England, as to the mistake that had been made! A few courteous words of explanation were all that were necessary to avoid the catastrophe that now means death to thousands on both sides and ruin and desolation to the magnificent country where the war will be fought out. Not one solitary word or hint was allowed to leak out and give some chance or hope for peace. The vilest hell that was ever invented by the diabolical religions of the world, as a place of punishment, would be too luxurious to consign the men composing such a government to. What a mixture of blundering stupidity, lying rascality, and criminal intent! And these men, including that other scoundrel in Africa, Cecil Rhodes, will, when the affair is all over, get off scot free, reap an immense reward in their private fortunes,—and for the sake of the fortunes of these few, many, many thousands will be killed or maimed for life, women left without support and children orphaned and a beautiful country be laid in desolation and ruin.

Unless some unforeseen aid turns up, the Boers will be beaten in the end. But to every lover of justice, to every hater of injustice, what glad tidings of great joy have come from the magnificent showing made by the Boers thus far! It is the old, old story, the lesson as old as history, but the lesson only learnt by few, and yet to be applied to life, on any large scale—that wherever there are men in any degree free and with some individual characteristics that imply some self-reliance, there you have a people worth at least three to one physically and otherwise of any people who are disciplined, drilled, dragooned in masses, and led by so-called "leaders of men." Magnificent fighters as the Boers are they know one trick worth all others; they pick out and kill the "leaders" opposed to them, and the men dragooned to move and act only as told are paralyzed. To prevent such tactics the English have been obliged to remove all signs that distinguished the officers from the men,—result the same,—for if the Boers fail to kill the leaders the led fail to spot them too, and the same uncertainty and paralysis arises. Absolutely the only way to crush such foes is to overwhelm them with numbers, and that is what England is preparing to do, and in doing so confesses (no matter what the end is) that, proportionately, she is beaten already.

Every nation that is "led," every nation that has a government, breaks down in the end. It builds up a huge machine supposed to guide and act for the indi-

vidual; the individual becomes powerless from lack of self-reliance, and most of all from lack of personal activity; the State then first of all becomes all-powerful, and afterwards all-weak because its staff now has to be drawn from a people now become individually more and more weakened and less self-reliant. And so the end must come, and always does come, no matter how large and powerful the State may appear. Indeed the larger and more abundant it is, the nearer is its end.

In view of the might and wealth of England it may seem far-fetched to see the beginning of the end as things now are with her. But I hold that this South African war is the beginning of such an end. To put the thing down England must now resort to ways and means that will put her future on a level with the present burdensome condition that prevails among the continental nations, all of whom have preceded her on the downward course, and she will now join the procession of governments going to their doom through the very agency they fondly believe to be their protection. The curse of militarism in its worst form will now be fastened on England in the shape that is ruining the rest of Europe. For several years past there has been talk of the introduction of permanent conscription; it is now only a question of time, and the English will have to face this proposal from their own government,—an honor yet unknown to them save by report.

Emperor William, with his withered arm, his diseased ear and crazy brain; the czar, with his blood clot on his brain, and his morose nature; the savage sultan; the equally savage, dishonored and broken-down emperor of Austria; the brigand Humbert on his shaky throne, and the last victim in the hands of the bourgeoisie in Paris;—these may all go into ecstasies of delight over England's plight,—but it will avail them nothing. There is nothing "in it" for any of them, for long, unless the world goes backward, which I do not believe it will. These will all go down, nearly together; when, we cannot tell, but go they will. For the solidarity of the world is growing, small though the beginnings may seem.

To the people the lesson is the same everywhere. Every government (including our own and that of the Transvaal) is always, and must always be, merely a handful of the privileged few causing wars abroad and commercial panic at home in the interest of these few and at the cost of the many. All the results of human labor are side-tracked in the hands of these few (who produce nothing) and all the cost and labor of production is dumped onto the many (who get a bare living, having produced all). Gradually, all over the world, people are coming to realize that the wages of treachery and rascality are wealth and power,—the wages of "patriotism" misery, want and early death. The number of those disowning allegiance to the traitor-rulers and disclaiming any "patriotism" is slowly but surely rising. From this will come a power higher and stronger than "patriotism"—the solidarity of the race. The ruin of war delays this coming of the glad time, and "Peace Congresses" are not meant to stop war, but as blinds to the race. In the future men will refuse to fight the battles of governments, and if fight they must will see that the enemy at home is the real enemy and that the enemy abroad can be made the real friend. Transfer the fight from abroad to home; refuse to fight the wars of government and they must cease. The war at home can be an absolutely bloodless one, and to be successful it must be bloodless. All that is needed is to refuse to fight at all. Drive the few to fighting their own battles by refusing to fight them for them; they will not because they cannot. The many have all in their own hands, by ways of peace, if they will only adopt them.

CHAS. B. COOPER.

WOULD SOCIAL FREEDOM NECESSARILY DISRUPT THE FAMILY?

The following paper was read before the San Francisco Freethought Society:

Friends,—I am not a prophet nor am I able to form a correct idea as to how the relations under social freedom will be between men and women, but I do know that marriage as it exists today is a form of slavery which is not only an obstacle in the development of our love qualities, but also cripples our individuality; consequently these relations have to undergo a complete change before freedom can be realized. Yet my answer in regard to the ques-

tion to be discussed here tonight is merely a conclusion formed from my observations of married life and so-called "free unions."

But before I proceed let me say that society must also economically undergo a reconstruction before social and sexual freedom can become more general; men and women will be economically independent of each other; their conception of morality will vary as much from that of today as day differs from night—consequently those who still cling to the idea that our present economic arrangements are unalterable and that our moral code is in accord with human nature will hardly grasp my ideas.

I cannot conceive of universal social freedom without economic freedom. To have that, people must first learn that economic freedom is not realized until we discard the idea of mine and thine, until there is neither buying nor selling, in short, until the means to sustain life with are at the free disposal of every man, woman and child. Taking this into consideration, and also the fact that male and female ought to be at liberty to love and to gratify their natural cravings whenever there is a mutual desire, without let or hindrance, our love and family relations will appear in a different light. In such a condition the women will not prostitute themselves for support, nor will men and women promise to love each other for any length of time. Desire—attraction and repulsion—will be the only guide in their relations.

The family, as known today, has not always been in existence, in fact is of comparative recent date and will not always exist if the theory of evolution is correct. Everything in society is subject to constant changes and so will our love relations change. Property, authority, the family, etc., have developed along parallel lines. Time does not permit my going into the question as to how the family originated; those who are anxious to inform themselves may read "Sociology" by Letourneau, "Primitive Folks" by Reclus and Morgan's works. But I may mention that there are yet several tribes known in which the children only know their mother. If you tell me that evolution has proven monogamy—the family—to be the most proper institution, I only need to say that all customs regarding sexual relationship, such as promiscuity, polyandry, polygamy, etc., were once by our ancestors considered the most proper, otherwise such customs would not have prevailed.

Now, it is evident that, when the question of support has become extinct and people will recognize no other moral code but mutual affection, the family as known today must become obsolete; for such thing as constant or "eternal" love is a psychological impossibility, a conventional lie. In a free society people's relations will be considerate and pleasing, a constant courting and wooing,—an attitude which today ends as soon as the marriage ceremony has been performed. There is not a married man or woman in this hall who will not admit—provided they married for love—that the happiest, the most beautiful period of their life was before they were tied, including the honeymoon, not realizing that they thereby put forth the strongest argument for freedom in our sexual relations.

I claim that real, genuine love—with rare exceptions—only exists when men and women are independent of each other and when they do not live together, for even if familiarity does not always breed contempt, it surely breeds indifference; our affections become neutralized and habit and custom take the place of love.

When we realize that the happy period of wooing and that of the honeymoon are things of the past, we reproach ourselves for not being constant or appreciative enough and try to deceive ourselves as to our real feelings; we make ourselves believe we are just as much attached as we used to be, and that we have only become more rational; that love has given way to reason as it were. We may succeed in deceiving ourselves and finally, after many spats, quarrels and "explanations," this "living together" becomes a matter of habit and is confused

with love. Those who have been married or lived in a so called "free union" a length of time know how affection is usually restored. We begin to find fault with each other; pick little quarrels and cease to be kind and turn our backs toward each other when we retire, and so forth, until the weakest or most sentimental of the two "gives in;" explanations follow, the woman usually begins to cry, the man finally pets and hugs her, and "affinity" is again restored for a few weeks. Thus it goes year in and year out. I heard a woman once say that according to her idea people ought to separate as soon as they find fault with each other. She certainly struck the key-note.

When freedom is realized, marriage or living together will be things of the past. People will only associate when there is a mutual desire and will make no promises as to how long their love shall last, nor will they promise to confine themselves to only one partner for the time being; it will be nothing but wooing and courtship, a natural endeavor to please each other. In short, there can be no real freedom unless the only tie is mutual attraction, and therefore I say: Yes, social freedom will disrupt the family as known today.

This may be horrifying to many because they neither understand human nature nor the quality of love. The idea of being separated from the children usually is obnoxious to a man because he does not know that the love to his children is simply a matter and a result of association; even the love of children for their parents is nothing but the result of association. This is a well known fact and needs no further elaboration.

"But," some may ask, "what shall we do in order to be happy when we are already married and have to bring up children?" and it is a pertinent question. Well, get rid of the idea that your wife or your husband is your property; realize that love cannot be chained and that mutual attraction is the only bond; know that freedom is conducive to happiness and confidence, while restrictions lead to deception and disrespect; learn that consideration and kindness may keep love alive and burning, while jealousy and tyranny will kill love and leave nothing but contempt behind.

ABOUT LAWYERS AND "SICH."

I was sorry to see the personal criticism of Henry Cohen by S. D. in a recent issue of Free Society. Not because it was against Comrade Cohen, particularly. If the latter had in any way forfeited the respect of radicals I would have no objection to S. D. or any other comrade hauling him over the coals. But Cohen's offense seems to have been merely that he has become a lawyer, and although it is a habit of many of our comrades to severely criticize all other comrades who study law and gain admission to the bar, in my opinion such indiscriminate criticism is uncalled for and uncomradely.

Why a person cannot be a good Anarchist because he practices law is beyond my comprehension. In fact the essence of revolutionary Anarchism is mastery of the tactics and weapons of the enemy, so that when occasion arises the methods may be used to destroy him. In my opinion if more Anarchists were to study law we would be better fitted, as a body, to cope with the upholders of the capitalist system. If we had Anarchist lawyers, Anarchist judges, and Anarchist justices of the peace in every State of the American Union there would be little danger of a repetition of the Chicago affair, to say nothing of minor cases. Had the leading lawyers for the defense on the Chicago trial been thoroughly conversant with Anarchism a much better showing might have been made; particularly had we had one good criminal lawyer on the case. I do not say that the verdict would have been different, for that was decided beforehand and independently of the trial.

It seems to me that radicals are very inconsistent, also, in their treatment of lawyer comrades. I had my share of abuse when I was preparing myself for the bar in Illinois. After being admitted I was associated for a time with a well known Socialist who was then preparing for the practice of law. We were making a specialty of cases where working people had been defrauded by their employers. We knew we

were honest, and sincerely desired to assist the wage workers to obtain justice. Now Anarchists and Socialists, like other people, frequently appeal to the law for redress, and it would be reasonable to suppose that, other things being equal, they would rather patronize sympathetic comrades than go to strangers or well known sharpers. But instead of doing this, our radical friends, (with a few exceptions) took their cases to well known rascals in the profession, and then when they were robbed (as they deserved to be under the circumstances) they railed bitterly against the whole scoundrelly class of lawyers, of whom they were fond of stating in public Holmes and Morgan were members.

We have among the lawyers of the country many of the brightest and best radicals, and it is unfair to them to call them scoundrels and other hard names. Besides, while I admit that there are many rascals in the profession, I deny that a man cannot be honest—according to the best moral code existent—and practice law. He may not be very successful in a financial way, but there are numerous and grievous wrongs to be redressed which can only be done in the practice of the law, and I hold that the criminal lawyer who will not under any circumstances prosecute a case (and I say with pride that while I made a specialty of criminal practice I never appeared for the prosecution), as well as the lawyer who puts in his time redressing the wrongs of his brother and sister workers is not only excusable, from an Anarchist point of view, but is a benefactor of his race and a direct worker in the cause of radical reform.

But while I was sorry to see the attack of S. D., I was still more pained to read Henry Cohen's somewhat vituperative reply. Cohen did not content himself with personal abuse of his critic, but rather went out of his way to make an uncalled for statement regarding Free Society and The Firebrand, which was in the way of a gratuitous insult to the contributors of the papers named. He also stated that several Communists assured him that they owed him a reply regarding his discussion with comrade John Turner, which was reported by me and published in some of the radical papers. Perhaps it has not occurred to Comrade Cohen that one reason why the matter was not taken up by other radicals was that those who read the report of the debate were under the impression that Turner had handled his side of the subject in such a masterly manner as to make further argument on his side superfluous. I was not the only one present at the discussion who thought that Comrade Turner had decidedly the best of the argument.

However, I do not favor indiscriminate attacks upon comrades or others merely because they have different opinions from my own, or because they have chosen vocations distasteful to me, or charge them with lunacy or ignorance because they happen to believe in things which I have never seen or heard, and I should be sorry to see this sort of criticism become common in the pages of Free Society.

WILLIAM HOLMES.

The Governor's exploit is to review the troops on muster days. I have seen him on horseback, with his hat off, listening to a chaplain's prayer. It chances that that is all I have ever seen of a Governor. I think that I could manage to get along without one.

I heartily accept the motto,—"That government is best which governs the least"; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which I also believe,—"That government is best which governs not at all"; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have.—Thoreau.

Emerson took me to see Thoreau, and I remember that he asked me what we were studying at Divinity College? I answered, "the scriptures." "Which?" he asked. I was puzzled until Emerson said, "I fear you will find our Thoreau a sad pagan."—M. Conway.

For San Francisco.

Comrade John Most will speak on "Unions as They Are and as They Ought To Be," Saturday, Jan. 13, at the S. F. Turn Hall, 323 Turk Street.

Sunday, Jan. 28, the revolutionary play, "The Weavers," will be given at the Eintracht Hall, Cor. Folsom & 12th Sts.

After the performance dancing will complete the program.

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TO AQUINALDO.

The following statement of assimilated facts is so familiar to the American people that we reproduce it from the Pocatontos Sun, Kan.:

"Agui," you do not know what a good thing you are missing by not wanting to become a citizen of this grand country of ours. There isn't anything else like it under the sun. You "ou't" to send a delegation over here to see us. This land of the free; this land of churches and 400,000 licensed saloons, Bibles, forts and guns, houses of prayer. The millionaires and paupers, theologians and thieves, libertines and liars, Christians and chain-gangs, politicians and poverty, schools and prisons, scallawags, trusts and tramps, virtue and vice. A land where we have men in Congress who have three wives and a lot in the penitentiary for having two wives. Where some men boil, or make sausages of their wives when they see a younger woman they want. Where young men ruin a girl and then cut her head off. Where we make bologna sausages of dogs and canned beef of sick cows, old mules and horses, and corpses of people who eat it. Where we put men in jail for not having means of support and on a rock pile if he hasn't a job.

Where we have a Congress of 400 men to make laws and a Supreme Court of nine men to set them aside. Where good whiskey makes bad men and bad men make good whiskey. Where newspapers are paid for suppressing the truth and made rich for telling a lie. Where professors draw their convictions and salaries from the same source. Where preachers are paid from \$1,000 to \$25,000 a year to dodge Satan and tickle the ears of the wealthy. Where business consists of getting property in any way that won't land you in the penitentiary. Where trusts hold you up and poverty, holds you down. Where men vote for what they do not want for fear they will not get what they want by voting for it. Where women wear false hair, and men dock their horses' tails. Where men vote for a thing one day and swear about it the other 364 days in the year. Where we have prayers on the floor of the national capitol and whiskey in the basement. Where we spend \$5,000 to bury a Congressman and \$10 to put away a working man who is poor. Where government pays an army officer's widow \$5,000 and a poor private who faced the shell \$144, with insinuations that he is a government pauper and burden because he lives. Where to be virtuous is to be lonesome and to be honest is to be a "crank." Where we sit on the safety valve of conscience and pull wide open the throttle of energy. Where gold is worshiped and God is used as a waste basket for our better thoughts and good resolutions. Where we pay \$15 for a dog and 15 cents a dozen to a poor woman for making shirts. Where we teach the "untutored Indian" the way of eternal life and kill him with bad "booze." Where we put a man in prison for stealing a loaf of bread and in Congress for stealing a bank or a railroad. Where check books talk and sin walks in broad daylight; justice is asleep; crime runs amuck; corruption permeates our social fabric; Satan laughs at every street corner. Come to us, Agui! We've got the grandest aggregation of good things, big things and hard things of all sizes, varieties and colors ever exhibited under

one tent. Send your delegation, and we will prove all these assertions for truths. —Needham Hustler.

COUNT TOLSTOY AND MR. CROSBY'S "PAIN TALK."

Count Leo Tolstoy has written a letter to Mr. Crosby with reference to his new book of verse "Plain Talk in Psalm and Parable" (Small, Maynard & Co., Boston) in which he announces his intention of having it translated in part into Russian as follows:

"I like the book very, very much. Some of the pieces—the choice is difficult because all are very good—I will have translated into Russian and published. There is nothing more new and interesting than the most common subjects looked at from a Christian point of view, and that is what you are doing in your book, and doing it with talent and sincerity."

The Letter-Box.

W. T. Langston, Okla.—We still make you the same offer we made about a year ago, namely: to devote one issue of Free Society to a treatise in which "the phenomena of Spiritualism" are demonstrated. The fact that some prominent and renowned men were and are believers in spooks and ghosts is no more convincing than when a Christian tells you that certain learned men believed in Jesus and the angels in heaven. If Spiritualism is a "science" it must be demonstrable, otherwise it is simply an assumption, no more valid than the Christian's assertion that there is a god and a paradise and a heaven. When you tell me that you had "experiences" which have convinced you that there are "spiritual phenomena," it reminds me of a Baptist woman who pointed to the top of a tree and said: "Don't you see Jesus sitting there? Oh, you blind man!" Of course I could not see Jesus, but I believe she thought she saw him, for she was a sincere and honest woman; her senses deceived her eyes.

Last Sunday at the Freethought Society a Spiritualist was asked to demonstrate "phenomena," and replied that the origin of the protoplasm could not be demonstrated, yet it was there. "But," said I, "the question before the house is not where spirits originate from, but whether they exist. We all know that the protoplasm exists."

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN OLD SOLDIER OF FREEDOM.

Lucifer announces that ill health has obliged the editor, Moses Harman, to go South to restore his health and where he will devote his time to the writing of an autobiography. As he is an old soldier of social freedom who has always been true to his convictions, persecution and imprisonment were his reward from those he endeavored to liberate. There is no doubt that his book will be of great interest to students of the social movements.

Orders for the book can be made for \$1 a copy by writing to Lucifer, 507 Carroll Ave., Chicago, Ill.

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